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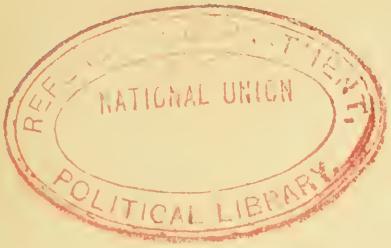
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MERE MAN

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# MERE MAN

BY

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# INTRODUCTION

BRIEFLY my premise is this: that the civilised world is slowly, but surely, reverting to a state, when, once again matriarchy, and not patriarchy, will rule the domestic relations, and that this will be the true solution of the much vexed Woman Question.

In order to present such a view of the case to the general reader, one must glance through a number of subjects which the 'nice' among us agree to ignore; but for this, the writer makes no apology, believing that the only attitude of which she should rightly feel ashamed would be prudery, and an affected ignorance of the plain facts of life; for, to quote Bernard Shaw, "there is nothing I despise more than the wicked convention that protects these things by forbidding a woman to mention them."

There is, however, grave difficulty in opening a discussion upon such matters,

although a better understanding of them would surely prove beneficial to both sexes. One is met with the parrot cry of ' free love,' and there is always to reckon the conflict with the vulgar mind, that knows no distinction between liberty and licence. The time has come, however, for men and women together in amity to thresh out the subject from start to finish; and, on our side, we do not propose to flinch from even an unsavoury fact, when it has any bearing upon the matter in hand.

# MERE MAN

## CHAPTER I

Of the many events which are at present seething in the social and economic world, that which is pregnant with most possibilities is the movement known as the Woman Question. The man in the street continues to scoff—the majority who are 'mostly fools'—but to the thoughtful, the position has long since passed the phase of ridicule; to them it is patent that the uprising of woman to-day, in practically every civilised country, demanding a tardy acknowledgment of her rights, is a real human need, not the cry of a discontented few, as for many years it was assumed to be.

That this desired change must come is inevitable, but that man will continue to hold his fortress as long as may be, is quite

a natural step, for it is the instinct of self-preservation. Not only are many men—with the deep antagonism of sex—opposing the measure, but thousands of women are doing all they can to hinder it; yet they are quite unable to do so, because it is one of the phases of that great force, evolution: it is literally social evolution. The world is ripe for a vast alteration in social conditions, and it has to come: as well try to stay the power which upheaves an island in the sea, or submerges another.

Men and women alike have been for centuries unconsciously working together towards a state of affairs, which will eventually free the whole motherhood of the world from the burden imposed upon it by the physical force of the male.

The gaining of political freedom for women is a very slow and tedious affair—a protracted war needing skill and great caution, and in which naturally the combatants have not shown their respective 'hands' to the adversary. At every slight victory for women (and they have con-

tinued to win one point of vantage after another) it has been repeatedly asked, where their demands are going to stop. Will they stay short of a seat in the house of representatives? How far, it is asked, are they going to encroach upon man's prerogatives?—whatever they may be. And these queries have been mostly shelved, partly from motives of policy, and partly from real ignorance of what this issue may be; for who can yet foresee the end, the result of so radical a change.

The immensity of the scheme is unfolding itself by degrees, and, to those who look beyond the party politics of the hour, it is plain that one of the matters early effected by women's power will be the reorganisation of the existing marriage conditions, either by law, or by common consent.

There will be many to cry out in protest at the bare suggestion of this, but the growing belief, on all sides, that modern needs are not satisfied by the arrangements which now obtain between the sexes,

distinctly points towards reform. Before such an alteration is carried out there will be many martyrs, and countless women will no doubt suffer far worse than bloodshed in the cause ; but this change is an essential step in the advance of civilisation ; for the law of our land, as it stands, with its divorces, its compromises, its lying platitudes and subterfuges, will obviously not hang together much longer.

## CHAPTER II

THE advance of civilisation in any given country, the mental and moral growth of a people, is, it has been observed, plainly visible in its treatment of women: where wives and mothers are given large powers, where daughters' rights are acknowledged, a nation is never on the downward grade. Thus in the last century or so, during which time social and economic problems have occupied the attention of the world, and man has to a great extent abandoned the trade of destruction, of war, civilised peoples have paused to realise, that not to destroy life, but to promote it, is the true mission of humanity, and women's position has advanced by leaps and bounds.

She is not the destroyer, but pre-eminently the lifegiver; her mission is to build up, not pull down; her counsel makes for peace, security, for temperate measures, and slowly but very surely her position as

natural head of the house is being recognised. It remains for modern thought to declare the mothers of men the most valued and honoured individuals of a nation.

Theoretically of course a mother is reverenced, but, practically, a pregnant woman, in classes struggling for a livelihood, may suffer under severe disadvantages, as the direct consequence of her condition.

Now, instead of being shunted out of the way as something temporarily in balk under those circumstances, her right to every consideration, as the progenitor of the race, is obvious: and the near future must see economic conditions so adjusted that, so far from maternity being any handicap upon a woman, and an inconvenience to be avoided, it will be counted unto her for righteousness, and she will, in consideration of her services, be regarded as the special charge of the community.

Instead of being at the mercy of, and *owned by*, an individual, with a right to use her ill or well according to his pleasure, she will be independent of him, and the

possessor of her own person, and of her offspring.

Even the most retrogressive and old-fashioned man of the day has no need to assure woman that her chief glory is in her child, and her true sphere, its necessary adjunct, the home in which she rears it.

Child and home always will be first with the majority of women, Norah and the Doll's House, notwithstanding; but, on the other hand, she has a right to be in a position to accept, or reject, maternity; to lead the public life of the purely intellectual being if it suits her inclinations—even as man is free to avoid the domestic tie. Or if she should choose to become the mother of one child, or more, to exercise that freedom of choice, without the hampering conditions of a lifelong tie with another individual, which might, or might not, prove congenial to her, or advantageous to her offspring.

Woman, and not man, would thus regulate the size of her family; and it is probably safe to predict, without taking a consensus

of female opinion, that she would not voluntarily become the mother of twenty children, or even ten to thirteen, which was the size of a very ordinary eighteenth-nineteenth century family, in England, as elsewhere.

The revolt of woman is not against maternity, the home, and the finer feelings of sex, as has so often been asserted; but it is against man's power to prostitute those feelings, and faculties, to his own base uses.

Man has by nature infinitely less concern with parental duties than woman, and even in the matter of actual procreation his part is really a subordinate one, and in no way to be compared with the maternal function.

That women have reached a point at which they intend to procure for themselves an entirely new position, economically, scarcely needs emphasising; a little concession here and there will not do, and men, who have run the universe up to date, have themselves to thank for this crisis.

Women—not all, but many of them—

have revolted against they scarcely know what. It looks like intellectual revolt, a desire to vindicate themselves mentally, and stand on political equality with the other sex; but the movement is something far deeper than that. It is not really that woman craves man's economic place in the world; it is more than doubtful if she could actually, and in all respects, fill the bill—that is, counting in the long strain of years, and the physical disabilities of the child-bearer.

It is a battle for the possession of her own body, and her own spiritual being; it is a revolt against *too much and compulsory maternity, and nothing but domesticity*, without the just recognition that her need of intellectual and spiritual freedom is much greater, not less, than man's.

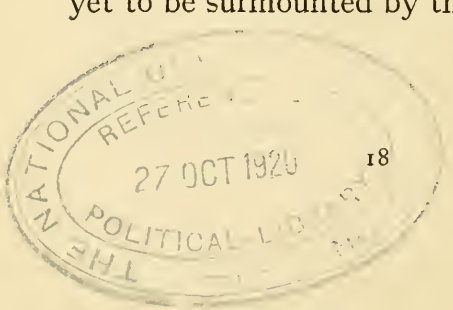
Man, until coercion was brought to bear upon him, denied her everything except the mechanical reproduction of her kind, whether she would or no.

Her nature, being essentially æsthetic and selective, composed of many delicate

perceptions, unknown to the male animal, and these qualities, in spite of non-recognition, having developed with the ages, the yoke has become too heavy to be borne: hence the present agitation, which, on the face of it, seems a desire to cast off the burden of sex for ever, whilst all that is needed and really desired is its readjustment.

Maternity ought to be, to a woman, no burden, but a great joy; but it should certainly rest with the individual to decide whether or no she desires it, in her own person.

Assuming that she is now free, under certain hampering conditions, to reject marriage, she is not free to invite it, in spite of all that is said as to woman's allurement, and so on. This is largely due to economic reasons, and we shall endeavour to trace in the following pages some of the difficulties yet to be surmounted by the sex.



## CHAPTER III

When the foundation of society was laid by the first herding together of human beings forming a horde—probably for protective purposes, against attacks of fierce animals—woman was the sole owner of her person, and of her young, and this was also the case for a considerable period afterwards. So long as humanity consisted of wild hunters, roaming the woods, it is safe to consider that man did not share woman's parental burdens; the care and responsibility of the young were hers, without question, as they are of any lower female animal to-day. In every class of animal life, where the young are not fully matured at birth, the duty of attending to the offspring naturally falls to the share of the mother, it being part of the maternal function to provide nourishment for the undeveloped young, immediately after birth, as it is during the pre-natal period.

The origin of the home is to be seen all around us, in the nest of the bird, and the lair of the wild beast. It is required during the brooding period, for the mother and young; and the human home was instituted when woman first crept into a cave or thicket, as a place of safety, in which to bring forth her child. Man, as a permanent inmate of the home, was of much later date; no doubt, as soon as it became a place of abode, and there was any benefit to be derived from it, he claimed a share of it as his right, and this was clearly his due if he helped protect it from enemies, or assisted in its 'up-keep.'

It is obvious that among these savage and unsettled tribes, although there could be no doubt as to the maternity of children, where there were a multiplicity of mates the paternity was open to question. In their first ignorant state, probably both sexes were unaware that the progeny were the joint offspring of male as well as female, though that lack of knowledge could not have lasted long.

At this period, sexual intercourse was no doubt promiscuous; the next step was polyandry, where the woman and child were the permanent factors, and the man an uncertain quantity: she was free to select the mate who pleased her, from time to time, and did so.

There is good reason to believe that the first 'property' settled upon and cultivated by primitive humanity was the woman's possession, and descended from mother to daughter. Woman was by natural law the head of the family, or household, and this was the basis of the original family arrangement, or matriarchate.

One questions how woman first fell from this 'high estate,' when it is conceded that she must, at this time, have been at least as physically fit as man, and probably more so.

When she ceased to be just wandering savage—a tigress fighting for her cubs—and first started domesticity, coupled with the most primitive forms of husbandry, and so on, these comparatively mild occu-

pations, together with the constant care of the young and helpless, probably tended towards the softening of her character: then carrying the child, both before and after birth, placed her at a disadvantage during considerable periods. Lastly man grew to *know* her weak times and seasons, and to take advantage of them. Ultimately she came to need his protection.

Even after the horde ceased wandering, and living in the open, and settled into something approaching a fixed abode, dwelling in caves, or building huts, and eventually tilling the soil, there is every reason to believe that the home, the children and the cultivation of the land were woman's department, whilst the men continued to hunt for food, and to fight both for the protection of their own tribe, and as aggressors of other tribes, weaker or richer than themselves.

As the tribe settled and habitated, and children became not so much a burden as an asset, it is likely that man, recognising in them property, promptly annexed

them, or, in the first instance, probably claimed partnership in them.

So soon as man first captured woman, from neighbouring tribes, and carried her off as the spoil of war, she was his undisputed possession, and the subjection of woman commenced. She was thus also brought into rivalry with the women of her captor's tribe; and these captures must have influenced the position of the free women. Without doubt this was the beginning, in human society, of the evils of competition!

And from this ownership of the woman and her children, by the man, sprang patriarchy.

Man used his first reasoning powers to subdue and tyrannise over the females of his kind, and he is the only male creature on the face of the earth who does this. Mercifully, all other males have not 'reason,' but only instinct, and that instinct prompts them to treat well their mates, or any female of their species. When man knew enough to understand his own strength, and the power of mind, he turned them against his womenfolk. He

subjected her until she became a slave and a drudge; she ceased to have possession of her own person, and her own progeny; and although at this period man was a barbarian, and he has since, age by age, developed into a very different being, almost everything about him and his condition is changed, except his attitude towards woman; she is practically where savage man placed her, through right of capture, and there is not another female animal, or an insect even, which occupies the same subordinate position, towards the male, as woman does to-day.

Man's vaunted protection of woman, and care for her, and her children, has just this substratum of truth in it, that she probably required protection from outside enemies in early times, and he 'protected' her to the extent of ill-using her himself instead of allowing another savage to ill-use her.

Woman was—is—a being sacred to the race: she had to be guarded when society was so constituted that a strange male

meant an enemy to the female. In the first awakening of communal interest, when humanity was little above the animal stage, and reason was scarcely above instinct, there was doubtless early evolved a sub-conscious knowledge that the female should not be the common property of all. Hence by degrees the custom was established whereby a man owned, and kept to himself, as many women as he could have and hold.

And here is worth noting the singular point of the position, grasped by the ancients, composed, it would seem, of a dim perception of natural history together with weird superstition, expressed in poetic metaphor, and handed down to us as a voice from the gods. For it is literally true that it was the knowledge of good and of evil, the dawn of reasoning power, that cast the first woman out of Paradise, and man along with her ; and, although man is very slow to learn it, so long as woman is denied her rightful position, so long will he too be debased, and they must both together turn their backs upon Eden.

## CHAPTER IV

The generally accepted belief that the male is naturally the superior—and therefore dominant—sex is rudely dispelled by the teaching of such scientists as have satisfied themselves, by minute research, that the male animal is of much later date, in the scheme of evolution, than the female; that in the very first primitive life evolved on the globe, and during many subsequent ages, the female functions alone were exercised in procreation, the male did not exist at all, and in the earliest stages of life the male was merely the parasite of the female. For countless time he was immeasurably her inferior, and he was only brought into being for the purpose of varying the type.

The female alone, according to her original construction, could have carried on the work of perpetuating the species, but for purposes of evolution variation was required; hence the evolution of the auxiliary sex,

which to-day asserts its supremacy over the very origin of its being. These ideas are somewhat startling to the uninitiated, and like other theories must be accepted by the unlearned upon the authority of the scientific ; just as they must needs accept the computation of the earth's circumference, or the distance to the moon, and a hundred and one other matters, that the average person does not attempt to verify for himself, but of which he can have ample proof, if he chooses to apply for it, first hand.

It is true that the continuity of animal life on the globe depends chiefly at the present period upon the functions of both male and female; but how much more important a part the female plays, in bringing to fruition the seed implanted, must be apparent to any reasoning being.

In the vegetable world alone, where the seed is fertilised by the mingling of two elements of a flower, the merest coalition of pollen with stigma ensures the fertilisation of that flower ; the pollen may appear

to be brushed away, the stamen may be subsequently destroyed, but the productiveness of the plant has thus been ensured, and so long as the base of the flower or pericarp remains intact, that plant will bring forth seed.

In many highly developed species of vegetable life, fertilisation is achieved in similar fashion—viz. one pistil to each flower, surrounded by several stamens, bearing upon their extreme ends a quantity of dust or pollen, which, as the flower reaches maturity, becomes loose and detachable, thereby enabling the breeze to carry it to the stigma—the pistil at maturity developing a slightly gummy surface at the tip, or stigma, to which pollen carried by the wind, or insects, readily adheres, and by the conjunction of these two, fructification takes place.

In some well-known plants, as for instance the common pumpkin, the male and female elements are represented by two distinct flowers growing upon the same vine ; the male flower of course bears no fruit, but

exists just to fertilise the female ; it (or he) is simply a barren flower furnishing nothing of utility except pollen ; whilst the female flower consists of the whole battery of reproduction, not only stigma and pistil, the organs through which fertilisation takes place, but the pericarp, in which is conceived and nurtured the germ of future life.

Although the external beauty of a flower fades after the nuptials, and petals, corolla, calyx, pistil, etc., wither completely, the life in the seed vessel increases in strength every day : the energy of the whole plant is in fact concentrated upon bringing that fruit to perfection, and, if it be an annual, when the seed is ripe the plant dies, and leaves with the ripened seed the duty of further reproducing its kind.

With the male principle, or pollen, the case is far different : it only reaches maturity as the stigma becomes ripe to receive it, and remains in a state of perfection for a day or so, perhaps only a few hours, and perishes, or is blown away, when

its momentary work is done—viz. that of fertilising either its own flower, or one of similar species, and thus of *varying the type*. It is of no more use, and cannot in any way further affect the new life which is about to be called into being—a life which will continue, however, century after century, to perpetuate, in like fashion, its species.

## CHAPTER V

SCIENCE has brought to light the fact that in the earliest forms of animal life the arrangement for reproduction was practically the same as in the foregoing simple outline respecting vegetable life. First there was only one sex—female—which alone performed all functions required for generating life ; afterwards the male was developed in the form of a kind of bag, carried by the female, and containing a substance similar in effect to the pollen of a flower.

At a later period the male evolved into a parasite which lived upon the female ; finally he became a separate creature. Through all these stages he was naturally much inferior to the female, of simple organism, and his functions, though developed with time, were always, as they have remained to date, far less important to the whole life of the globe than that of his mate.

Here it seems almost unnecessary to point out that whilst, both in plant and animal life, the work of the female is supremely important, in procreating and maintaining life in the whole world—possibly in all the worlds—that of the male is evanescent, and, beyond one single act of generation, superfluous.

Many a man dies before the birth of the child that he has begotten, which circumstance is, of course, in no way detrimental to the physical well-being of the child. But with the mother, all the months preceding the birth of her young, and even after it, her health, her moods, her mental and moral condition, are all reflected upon the child. Whatever she may do, and even think, is apt to be reproduced in her progeny. The most common proof of this is the well-known fact that a shock or fright of any kind, to the pregnant woman, will probably cause her child to be born crippled, or deformed, perhaps idiotic, or at least with some ugly disfiguring mark. How much the character of the child is

affected by the mother, the ignorant and thoughtless do not pause to consider; but all her humours, during those two hundred and sixty-odd days, will express themselves in the offspring either mentally or physically.

Granting that one realises the importance of the above, it is plain that the woman's life should be free from disease, accident, misfortune of all kind during those many months; not to mention her mental and moral health, which is of even graver moment.

Yet thousands of children, most of them in fact, are subjected, vicariously, to the most awful suffering and hardship engendered for them by the conduct of their parents previous to their birth; they are born with a subconscious load of sin and misery instead of starting fair, with minds and bodies as free, as imperfect human nature can be free, of inherited ills. Immense numbers of labouring women work at trades, during pregnancy, which are absolutely injurious to themselves and to the unborn

child; and most of them, in addition to this, are at the same time subject to man's gross sensuality, whilst the lowest animals are immune from any interference from the opposite sex under like circumstances.

How man's will has been forced upon woman, through ages of brutish violence, when the only right was might, is a long and painful story: but, as already stated, it is a well-established fact that matriarchy, and not patriarchy, was the natural system of family life in the earliest stages of human society. Primitive woman selected her mate according as he appealed to her favour; the finest, strongest, handsomest, etc., were thus chosen to reproduce their kind; but the fact of fulfilling this natural law—viz. generating his kind—gave the man no right to ownership, body and soul, of the woman, his mate.

Sexual selection has, through all time, played the principal part in raising the standard of the numerous species; and among the many changes which have been wrought in woman's character, in the

passing of the centuries, the elemental selective faculty still remains intact, only more keen than ever.

For countless ages it has been of little avail, for her captors have forced her inclinations; from the days when woman was the spoil of war, to the present period, when economic conditions leave her practically at the mercy of the man who can afford to 'maintain' her, woman has mostly had to suppress or conceal her preferences: yet to-day that instinct of selection, so far from being eradicated, is one of the primitive traits which are her deathless inheritance.

Subtly, and half unconsciously, it is the vindication of that principle which is causing the uprising of woman to-day. Whether she knows it or not, it is the tyranny of the male, sexually, that she is throwing off.

Her aim is not the place, or power, or higher wages, or the seat in parliament, or her right to record a vote, but her right to hold authority in the procreation of the world; her absolute right, as the

genesis of the race, to her full power, in matters sexual and spiritual.

Of things intellectual one says nothing, and advisedly, trusting the brain power to take care of itself, and to come out on top : given a fair field and no favour, woman will still hold her place here. Intellect is of neither ' sex,' and if the race is started with no handicaps, the fit will survive.

Let men have the weightiest brains, and all the constructive and administrative ability, and all the initiative in great affairs, which they claim, if they can establish a sole right to the position ; since that is their coveted rôle, let them play it by all means, *if they can.*

The woman's ' sphere,' as man has said *ad nauseum,* is the home ; and it should be literally true that " the hand that rocks the cradle," etc., etc.

The child and the home belong essentially to the woman, and that man has asserted authority over both is base usurpation. Man's rule was established, as we have seen, through sheer physical force, and, although

a great deal of the active tyranny of the male has been superseded in the present day—at any rate in the more highly civilised countries and classes—the fact remains that man still holds the ribbons; he still at least fancies himself the pivot, upon which the home and the family move.

The day has gone by for reiterating that woman wants to take man's place. She does not, in the aggregate, nor has she any exclusive right to take a place for which man may be better fitted—but she has decidedly a place of her own, and that a much more valuable one than man can ever occupy. She is the mother of the race, it is she who guides the future of the world, and so she will continue to do, when the petty observances of an effete marriage system have vanished into the past.



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## CHAPTER VI

It is the custom for certain moderns—though it might be more correct to say fossils—to describe woman as a creature of unbridled emotions, blind impulses, and characterised, in all the weighty affairs of life, by a complete lack of reason.

Yet the ancients represented Justice as a woman, blindfold, and in whose hands were the pair of nicely balanced scales.

How did such an idea obtain in a world where man held the power, all the high places, and certainly the mundane administration of justice! Because, we take it, it was recognised that in woman is embodied the finer perceptions, the sensibility, which is capable of weighing the personal equation. To man is given the virile force, the initiative, the desire to go forth and conquer; woman is the restraining influence, the looker-on in the game, and to whom the right, the justice of a cause, as tending to the

progress of the race, is of vastly more importance than it is to man, for she has not only herself but her helpless young to consider.

Woman is so constituted, that to her the psychical qualities are of far more moment than to the man. Byron's much quoted words are in their essence true, and "love is of man's life a thing apart—'tis woman's whole existence." Not necessarily love of a lover, in its literal sense, but love of her kind; where a large portion of man's interest is absorbed by external objects, things, woman's is centred in humanity; she can never become in the mass the hardened, abstract entity which her detractors like to prophesy, because the world must always be full of mothers.

Round her revolves the sentiment of the world, the home, the child, the moral qualities, and the aspirations towards the greatest good; and this, not because she has been secluded, and kept out of the hurly-burly of life, as her critics are so prone to assert, but because her tempera-

ment is such that (at her highest) spirituality is her attribute, and that, in almost every woman, a certain psychical quality is inherent.

Though a woman should be found practising every virtue, in its extreme degree, renouncing everything pertaining to the flesh—as some more or less apocryphal saints have been said to do—nobody would call her 'too good,' or 'unwomanly' for leading such a life. But take a man who did exactly the same, and he would at once be called—and truly so—'unmanly.'

A man may, and can, be highly moral, but to be a complete 'man' he must be compounded of flesh as well as spirit, and this by reason of his maleness; not that one infers he is less worthy thereby, but that he is so, simply and solely because "it is his nature to."

A great deal has been said and written, and particularly in the earliest stages of the woman movement, about the absolute 'equality' of woman with man, intellectu-

ally, physically, and in every possible way, and a great deal of erroneous reasoning has been done under this head, by starting from a false premise : woman is not " the lesser man, but diverse," and all the arguments to prove the similarity of the sexes, spiritually and morally, are just as absurd as would be an attempt to prove their structural identity.

Male and female were each evolved to fulfil his and her own particular functions, and the only point at which they are at all equal is the mental one. It is strange that such a large amount of struggle and argument have been required to establish woman's intellectual equality with man, when this is just where the sexes stand upon level ground, and the fact was least in need of demonstration.

The mental qualities seem to be those of which both sexes are in equal need, and which both can utilise in like measure, for the benefit of all.

Great stress was laid, and is still in some quarters, upon the similarity of the sexes,

the only difference, it has been said, is in the habit and training of centuries, developing the one sex, and curbing the other; which is true enough of the intellect; but always one is struck with the hollowness of the arguments, when they touch upon moral and psychical questions. Even the training and bias of many centuries does not account for the utter dissimilarity of outlook from the one and the other; and the hopeless and useless task is apparent, of inducing man to conform to woman's idea of "virtue," or of breaking down the barriers, and decreeing that woman—woman at her highest and best—would ever live the life, in all particulars, of man, even at his best.

It is unthinkable.

This brings us to the question of conventional 'morality,' and we are confronted with the difficulty, which up to date has seemed an unsurmountable one, of finding a way out of the tangle of social vices, which beset every civilised country in the world.

It is not because of the sexes' likeness, but of their great dissimilarity, that woman's claim is an absolutely just one to individual political representation.

On matters of ethics, and pure reason, men and women can be fully agreed, but, directly the subject of practical morality creeps in, the difference in perspective is obvious.

The sexual relation is a matter upon which average man—and we emphasise the average—is unfit to reason; the finer shades of thought seem invisible to him: in his view a woman is just a woman, the object of whose life should be to subject herself to his will: he can see *no good* in one who repudiates this position, and he will count a woman entirely desirable if she is nothing but a creature of sex. That appears to be the way a certain stamp of man is built; and such an one is therefore quite unreliable to pronounce upon this subject.

Now, a woman need have no inclination whatever to desert from her own camp, into

that of the enemy (?), and yet be prompted by a sense of fair play to assert, that it is futile and unjust to attempt to force upon man a code of morals which he is quite unable to live up to. He has long enough interfered with the conduct of woman, both in her social and domestic capacities, and forced upon her useless restraints and disabilities.

Let woman see to it that she be more magnanimous; she is now, at long last, coming into her kingdom; let her use her power to so revise the moral code that man may fulfil the law of his being, without, in so doing, degrading and debasing countless women and potential mothers.

Man has been demonstrating for centuries that there are two standards of morality (using the word in its narrowest sense), one for the male, and the other for the female, and there we heartily agree with him; but we take leave to add that the higher of these two will inevitably, and in a more spiritualised world, take precedence of that which is based upon the sensuous.

## CHAPTER VII

WOMAN, among her many and varied uses to man, has from time immemorial served as a convenient scapegoat for his sins.

But, the 'blessed St Anthony' and his tribe notwithstanding, and with all the allurements of Eve, and her sex, thrown in, it must be conceded that prostitution was instituted by man, solely for man's pleasure and convenience, and in no sense has it been other than a great wrong and a misfortune to woman.

Before there was any marriage, there was no prostitution; all intercourse between the sexes was free and promiscuous—a very different thing; but where man decided to 'own' a woman, or women, and children, the other institution grew up beside it, and for this reason. Man claimed the exclusive use of a wife—she was to bear his children and know no other man—and at the same time he willed that he should

be free to consort with as many women as pleased him, calling them concubines, hetairæ, prostitutes, and so forth, according to the world he lived in and the fashion of the time; he arranged that the wife owed 'duty' to him, but he recognised none towards her; she was to lead a monogamous life; the husband has never attempted to do so.

Now, even in such countries as those in which a plurality of wives is permitted by law and convention, prostitution has always flourished; man has chosen deliberately to foster a type of woman who will indulge his grossest desires—the harem-bred provocative creature, whose sex is at once most patent and most mysterious—she is the necessary stimulus to his jaded appetites, she assists him in pleasures which he knows would be unworthy in the mother of his children.

A tacit admission that man gives way to moods, at periods, when he is not the fit associate of refined woman.

Furthermore, his own selfishness alone

has been consulted in the *sub rosa* polygamous arrangement, as he is under no necessity of keeping the unauthorised woman for life, but can employ her from time to time, and drop her again, as the whim takes him, carefully hedging himself against any liability, and also leaving himself free for any amount of variety and promiscuity he may choose.

This woman, having no fixed wage, and no rights at law, depends for her success upon her ability to exploit man, and to live upon her wits. Man has created a Frankenstein monster which he is now unable to control, or cope with; she preys upon the society who deliberately propagated her; she is an unnatural creature bred of man's unchecked sensuality, and now he turns up his respectable eyes in amazement at the 'evil of our streets' although he knows full well that very few of his sex have reached maturity, who have not helped to spread that vice.

The social evil is the weak spot in all communities (except those which are

counted savage), and whilst such a festering sore, with its attendant horrors, grows and spreads in the midst of every nation, recognised, licensed, encouraged, how can that people claim to have advanced one step in morals:—rather have they retrograded far below the level of the beasts that perish.

The same state which upholds the holy estate of matrimony, and acts in concert with the established churches, supports and licenses prostitution (if not in England, in other countries of similar status), and so arranges the lives of many of its servants that they are driven to avail themselves of this condition of affairs. Legitimate marriage is practically placed outside the reach of the rank and file of the British army, this also applies to certain persons of both sexes holding official appointments in Government service, and to men holding bachelor fellowships and so on at some of the seats of learning; any of whom entering into marriage do so under penalty of dismissal.

Without doubt numberless women em-

bark upon the profession of the streets, not from deliberate vice, but as a means of making a living, and the terrible part of their fate is that, broadly speaking, there is no turning back. It is but a truism to say that they are the victims of social conditions, and, in most cases, are to be far more pitied than censured.

This whole subject is a revolting one, for it is plain that, from the very earliest formation of society, women have been sacrificed to men's appetites, and largely in former times in the name of religion. Nor will there be any serious reform in sexual matters whilst the custom continues of making a holocaust of thousands of victims, on purpose to provide a certain proportion of "virtuous" women, for the delectation of man in his virtuous moods.

If the subject were not so pitiful it would be amusing to hear the gravity with which twentieth-century man tells woman to stay at home and mind her babies, when he, and he only, is responsible for the arrangement of the much vaunted family life,

whereby numberless women are absolutely prohibited from having a family of their own.

Man assumes the right to regulate the numerical strength of the family ; he holds the key to the position by sheer power of pounds, shillings and pence, and it is by his decree that, whilst immense numbers of women are celibates, still greater numbers are placed outside all possibilities of domestic life—are prostituted to gratify his gross requirements. Man, and not woman, is responsible for this greatest blot on the face of the earth—a condition which cannot last when woman has power in her hands, and ceases to accept the position she has been forced into, as the appendage of man.

Without question, woman's worst qualities have been fostered by her state of subjection, and her dependence upon man's favour for a living, and this applies to the legal marriage, no less than to the irregular connection. The whole female 'market' is suffering from lack of organisation ; therefore each individual has been fighting

for her own hand, and her means of subsistence; some, by these means, getting far more than their due, whilst many others get less.

From want of unity in women's demands, men now obtain women *on the men's terms*, hence all the evils of sweating, and the mischief of supply being greater than demand. Sentimentalists may say that this is placing the sacred conjugal connection at the level of the labour market, but, whether they approve or no, woman's relation to man has got to be organised in exactly the same way. What man wants of woman are her services, in some form or other: she has therefore a right to only concede those services, at a just value; and the man cannot be buyer and seller too. Up to date, man has managed to possess himself of woman's person, her children, until a recent date her property, and to this very day her labour, if she is his wife.

True, she is clothed and fed at her husband's expense—if he has means—and her services are thus ranked at the very lowest

rate of the labour market. She is paid *no wages or commission*, and yet is counted the ' agent ' of her husband in commercial transactions. Of course she is to consider man's devotion as the crowning glory of her compensation, but the woman's devotion and self-sacrifice are at a discount, and merely thrown in as a makeweight ; we don't hear that they are sized up, as of marketable value, and allowed for, in money or kind.

## CHAPTER VIII

In all the ages there has been no written word which has so greatly influenced so large a number of persons as the collective writings known as the Bible ; but one has only calmly to weigh those books to realise that the Mosaic Jehovah was merely glorified man, greater and bigger, and with stronger lust for war and revenge.

Broadly speaking, the order (of at least the Old Testament) is, to man, to do as he will, and to woman, to do as she must.

Physical power was naturally the god of a half-civilised people, and Providence was apt to be on the side of the strongest army, and the largest family which helped to swell that army.

A growing social system recognised that numerical strength, increase in cattle, flocks, grain, the family, tended towards wealth and power among nations—in a word, progress—though the Mosaic law which de-

creed that man should increase and multiply was of course founded upon a much older basis than the social polity of a few wandering tribes of Israelites.

To-day man's right to increase and multiply, *ad libitum*, is being very seriously challenged by the attitude of modern woman; yet his desire is a natural law, and not merely a question of individual or national choice; it is not a "measure," such as tariff reform or military disarmament, etc., to be decided according to political expediency.

It is in fact the primary instinct, whereby this round world is alive to-day; as well seek to bale out the ocean as to root out from humanity the very reason of its being.

But it is well to bear in mind that one may "train desire, for you can never chain it," and although this instinct cannot, and should not, be eliminated, it can be guided into the least mischievous channels.

There is a poetic fiction that man and woman have, together, formed the two halves of a complete whole; but in reality

it is just because the two parts have been so unequally divided that the domestic and marital relations, and indeed all other human concerns (which are in the joint interest of all), are so utterly lopsided. Instead of *half* the whole, man has annexed, as his own share, just about seven-eighths of everything ; the marvel is that woman has held her own, so well as she has done, in the circumstances.

During the ages, woman has had meted out to her some privileges, and many wrongs, but no rights ; never in historic times has her legitimate authority been acknowledged, even in matters most vital to herself : consequently, most of the famous women, who have achieved a place in history, were possessed of anything but the representative virtues of their sex, for they were those who did not disdain to use stealth and artifice to accomplish their ends—these being the only doors open to them, without provoking the jealousy of men.

It must be remembered that man has always been free to follow his own bent,

to develop his character and to frame the laws which guide humanity; whilst civilised woman has had no power as law-maker, and she has never been free to act according to the dictates of her own nature. For countless centuries she has been acting under the orders of the 'master'; it has always been coercion, in some form or other: even the gibe 'old maid' has been of grave importance in her destiny, and in the upper and middle classes has been at least as effective an agent as the navvy's fist, in a lower stratum.

Man has been the chief, almost the sole, exponent of religion, and he has credited the beneficent Creator with giving him, as his chief heritage—second only to life itself—a faculty which (uncurbed) is as destructive as a wild beast. He has recognised no check upon this desire, but has let it overrun the whole world, saying he has his orders from On High; then when the consequences become inconvenient he talks of Original Sin, and says it's all on account of Mother Eve!

The one thing he has not tried, and has prevented woman from achieving, is restraint and moderation.

His only alternative to running amok with his passions has been retiring to a monastery; every plan has been tried except giving woman—the natural restraining force—the opportunity of putting a brake upon the wheel.

Marriage vows *of a man* were made presumably to accomplish this end; they have never bound him in any age. Man has never attempted to lead the (sexually) exclusive life led by ordinary refined woman, and it is only affectation to pretend that he has.

We have seen that the trouble began in remote ages, in the Garden of Eden or its equivalent: it is now deeply overlaid by the law and convention of all lands, and to-day redress for woman is to be looked for through a revision of the obsolete marriage laws, which, even if they ever had a fair reason for their being, are quite unfit for modern requirements.

The fact is, man is not by nature a monogamous animal, and all decrees framed to force him to be faithful through life to one mate have failed; yet it suits civilisation to sham, and to pretend that he is the 'husband of one wife.' Christianity has spent a vast number of years trying to change a law of nature, and with very indifferent success, whilst common-sense points to a much simpler plan.

It is useless condemning human nature, because it cannot adjust itself to conventional laws; the obvious redress for this 'wrong' is to frame the laws to accommodate human nature, not *vice versa*, and to cease calling an act 'immoral,' just because it runs counter to the decree of a few churchmen.

"The right of the citizen ends where the right of the next citizen begins," and an act only ceases to be right, *if it is wronging somebody*—even oneself.

The element of sex in nature was evolved to ensure the continuity of life upon the globe; for countless time reproduction was

the male creature's sole function, and to-day, although humanity has developed many qualities, intellectual and social, reproduction is the chief object of his being. To be sure it is the primary object in the lives of both sexes, their joint obligation to the race, yet in this matter, particularly, we may observe so great a dissimilarity between their views, that thoughtful persons may well pause to consider whether it is altogether fair that man and woman should be judged by the same standard.

Nature's order to man is 'create, increase and multiply at all hazards'; whilst to woman is given the calmer view of sexual relations, the discriminative faculty; and certainly in her hands should lie the power to select or reject a candidate to her favour, in the interest of her unborn children. Power should be given her, not nominally, but really, to curb and restrain the blind instinct of man. It should be for the woman to hold the scales, and weigh out the ingredients that go to the making of another individual: her hand and judg-

ment should decide these matters of supreme importance to all.

Ruskin says somewhere that woman has such unbounded influence in the world for good that whatever goes wrong may fairly be considered her fault! And countless others have of course voiced the same opinion, since our ancestor hedged behind "the woman tempted me and I did eat."

It is not just to blame woman now, as she is in a false position; she is the dependant of man, and is yet blamed for all the consequences of that dependence: but even the conventional way of condemning her, alone, in all slips from chastity, would be fair if the law gave her equal power with man.

If, when her freedom is gained, she should act quite as she does at present in her relation to him, there would be no blame severe enough with which to censure her.

Every man who comes into close intimacy with a woman, in the way of either friendship, or love, is a better man, or a worse one, by reason of that contact; and every

woman, good or bad, knows this; it is really the pith of the much quoted 'eternal feminine' principle.

One often hears it said, that when a woman is bad, she is worse than a man, though one does not hear so much of the reverse side of the subject; that when she is good she is considerably better. The fact is, the female is a more complex being than the male, a much stronger character altogether, and with greater capacities for good and evil. In their emotional and sentimental relations woman is the performer, man the instrument, and it is in this way that her influence is so rightly, or wrongly, used.

But, underlying the social amenities, there is ever to be traced a deep antagonism between the sexes: this the result of a silent struggle, constantly being waged, between the physical and the psychical lives of the race.

## CHAPTER IX

SEXUAL selection, in its highly developed phase, is the sentiment which has inspired all the romance this world has known; every tale of love requited, or of thwarted and hopeless passion, has for its root this primal instinct.

Even in war and glory, in battles for supremacy and worldly power, men have claimed, as their highest recompense, woman, either by force of victory, or by fair ladies' favour: selection has also called into being the greater part of what is beautiful in nature, as in art.

It is generally conceded to be nature's plan for the evolution of species, whether it be of man or of mollusc, and every form of life, animal and vegetable, is so constituted that it may assist, consciously or unconsciously, in raising its own type a little—an infinitesimally little—in the scale of development.

This is accomplished, as the most cursory reader now knows, by the mating of the most suitable, and the survival of the fittest, and so on, through all the intricacies of the variation and specialisation of types.

Just as domestic stock is improved by the intervention of man, the highest types of the horse, or cattle, or dog, mated together to the exclusion of the unfit, until their progeny develop a certain approved strain, those that fall below the standard, or develop upon undesirable lines, being weeded out, and the 'fit' being again mated, until in a very few generations a marked improvement in the breed is established. This plan continued, even when worked out through Nature's slow laborious methods, results, through countless ages, in improved structural development, in differentiation of the species, and finally in physical, mental and moral superiority in the human race.

Hence at one end of the scale we find a protozoan, and at the other end—a Guglielmo Marconi!

Science leaves us no doubt that, whereas the instinct of the male is to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth, in the female is implanted the selective qualities, which in the human female are so developed that we call them discriminative and æsthetic characteristics; and that in ages past, even in the human family, 'selection'—the choosing of the mate—was the female's prerogative.

In the animal, and notably in the insect, kingdom that law, of course, still prevails; the female has her right of choice, and exercises it, and, although the preferences and antipathies of a lower animal are seldom so strongly marked (to our observation) as is the case with human beings, they are yet very considerable indeed, in the higher types, and even in the lowest *that law is still in operation.*

Here we come to a very important point: assuming that Darwin's case is proven (and we are not aware that anyone to date has successfully controverted his theory of sexual selection), every living species in the

world has reached its present state of development as the result of this law; mankind alone having ceased to follow that instinct, the very most important factor in the march of progress.

In the human family only the female's right of choice has been entirely subordinated to man, and his commercialism; she alone foregoes the right to choose her fitting mate, and the progenitor of her young, though nobody else is capable of doing it for her!

Yet it is plain to the most ordinary observer that her selective faculty is a marked characteristic; the much decried quality of woman as temptress, as told in heart-rending language by St Anthony, St Kevin, and various mediæval monks, etc., is of course Nature's provision for enabling woman to select the right mate; just as is man's quality (also decried) of weakness under temptation. Nature intended that he should come at the call of sex—should be in fact unable to resist the female who *selected* him.

Woman succumbed in the first place to brute force, secondly to the power of the almighty dollar, and finally to convention, strongest perhaps of all three, in debarring her from intimating, by so much as a word, her choice of a mate. It is monstrous to reflect that, whilst animals mate for ' love,' humans marry for almost any other reason, though we are apt to say anything gross or sensual is ' like an animal.'

Centuries of dependence upon, and oppression by, her conquerors have made woman passively accept the position assigned to her ; but the lowest point of human retrogression was reached when primitive man first *knew* his power, and exercised it to enslave and degrade her.

That effectually put woman out of the reckoning in sexual selection ; her special characteristic was set aside, and never again allowed fair play ; therefore, instead of man and woman exercising for the general welfare their respective qualities, the finer nature was subjected to the grosser, and woman's most valuable attribute counted useless.

From the time when woman became the prize of war, her freedom of choice was gone; she may 'choose' now, and does intellectually and emotionally; and, even hampered as she is, she may gain the desire of her natural mate, and then—marry the other man who can afford to maintain her. The whole position of sexual selection, among human beings, has become so distorted by conventional usage, that it is commonly supposed to be the right of man to do the selecting, and this merely because his purse gives him the trumpery right to 'propose'; for certainly the purse is his only justification.

Given two people equally rich, or equally poor, why should not the overture come from the woman? But conventional people will give us some psychological reason why this is impossible; the generally accepted one being that man *prefers* to hunt his prey, and sets greater value upon those animals which are most difficult to capture. A high-minded theory this is truly! The fact being that man wishes

to consider he is conferring a favour upon the object of his choice, and would feel small if he had to admit that he was the recipient of the benefits.

Hence the type of woman, who, grown cunning through long years of oppression, panders to this notion, and persuades the deluded creature that she is quite content to be the object of his bounty! And this charming, weak, clinging individual lulls his suspicions to rest, and then preys upon him, to her (and his) heart's content!

Man's sole claim to the ownership of the woman and the child is by reason of providing them with bread, and nowadays it is almost a matter of surprise when he does so much as that. It would be interesting to know the number of women, in Great Britain alone, who *contribute at least* to the support of themselves and their children, either by inherited fortune, or by sheer labour: so that that reason is simply exploded, and a better one need be found. Neither is right divine much of an argument; when patriarchal laws were framed,

men were ' in office ' so to speak, and their bias was towards their own sex; their providence was simply a man like themselves, or God in man's image, speaking from the seat of judgment. Women were then, even more than now, enslaved, and naturally they hadn't a chance to vote for, or against, the measure. Men arranged matters upon " the good old plan, that those who've got shall keep the power, and those may take who can."

## CHAPTER X

The spiritual qualities of woman have been theoretically acknowledged and glorified, since first a poet learned to sing, and, to a member of the illogical sex, this seems a remarkably poor reason why she should subject herself to a being admittedly her inferior, in the higher psychical qualities.

However, in discussing these points, there is no wish to put blame, or praise, on either side, but just to sum up the position on its merits : male and female created He them, that between the spirit, and the senses, a balance should be struck, each contributing a share to the common good, and the advancement of future generations.

Man is endowed with sexual imperative, that it is useless to blame him for possessing, and it is time we acknowledged that, despite civilisation and mental development, and all the qualities that go to the making of modern culture, procreation is the primary

object of his being; the act is a matter of acute personal pleasure in order that its fulfilment may be ensured; it is not left to the individual really to decide whether or no he will carry out Nature's law; he *must* obey, practically, whether he will or not.

Laws, and rules of conduct modify and regulate the outward expression of the sexual relation, in some measure, but up to date they have done so only in a very minor degree: the primary facts, in all their crude savagery, remain. Nature's order to both sexes is to perpetuate the species, but with man it is a blind, overwhelming instinct, and in its very essence unreasoning, unrestrained; the female principle is the curb to direct this force in the interests of the type; her main, though unconscious, effort is towards specialising the type, and preserving its purity, whilst that of the male is obviously to vary it.

Woman is instinctively aware, as part of her maternal equipment, what is valuable or worthless for her purpose, and in lower

species the female, exercising her selective power, out of a mass of candidates makes use of the one she desires, leaving the others to perish—just so much waste matter. Truly of Nature it is said " so careful of the type she seems, so careless of the single life."

The great fact which is overlooked by the majority is that sex exists, not for personal gratification, and mere propagation at *all costs*, but for the differentiation, adaptation and elevation of the species, hence the reason of personal preferences and discrimination; the satisfaction of the individual is but the means to an end, and the end to be served is the advancement of the type. To disobey this dictate of Nature—selection—is to fail in bringing forth the highest of which we are capable, and the child born against either parent's desire must suffer in consequence.

For whatever inscrutable purpose this world has been created, we are at least agreed that there is an Intention, a Will, impelling us to continue, and perfect, the

species, and to work upward toward the highest. We have reached a state of development when this intention is applied by the union of both sexes, and, whilst each is supremely necessary to the other, it is a profound mistake, and retrogressive to the race, that man should hold sway in matters supersensuous. The part man plays in reproduction is comparatively a crude and sensuous one. He does not, and cannot, understand what it is to be a woman, whose complex organism, both mental and bodily, is governed largely by the maternal principle.

It is notorious that man does not understand woman, and many of his acts are unintentionally cruel, and purely the result of ignorance; it is the usual consequence of power, placed in the hands of those unable adequately to exercise it.

For countless ages, man has assumed the right to dictate to woman, as to what he calls her 'purity,' although the very meaning of the quality is hidden from such an one as he is; he evidently thinks it is

something to do with the rights of property —His property! Purity—sexual exclusiveness in a woman—has, at the heart of it, nothing at all to do with her obligation to man (as he fondly imagines), it is her obligation to the race, and to her (possibly) unborn children. In woman the quality called modesty, the inner delicacy, and natural shrinking from the encroaching male, is really instinctive defence of the future generation.

That woman with her powers of maternity, should be under the control, and at the mercy of another being, and her inferior at that, is altogether degrading: and so long as man holds the supreme position, the maternal instinct, the best and purest in nature, will be subjected to the physical sensuousness of the union, and thus sensuality will keep on multiplying itself at compound interest.

To the highest type of woman, selection, through personal preference, where reason and heart are at one, together with the procreation of her kind, are the sole justifi-

cation for gratification of the senses, and many a woman, failing to obtain the object of her choice, renounces the whole male sex in consequence ; not, as is so commonly supposed, because she is sought by nobody else, but because sexual desire dies within her.

Now, such an attitude would be most unnatural in man; there have been such cases no doubt, but they are very rare ; his desire is primarily to mate, and although granted he has his preferences, he has not the same discriminative qualities, in sexual matters, as has the female: in all these ages, he has not evolved any to speak of, and Nature apparently did not intend that he should. He is still to a large extent primitive animal, multiplying his kind without stint : *therefore* he requires the repression of the being more psychically developed than himself.

Force is needed, and very great force, to keep this world moving, but it requires the subtle poise of the spirit to make the balance equal. Strength alone is sheer

brutality, and a soulless quality in itself: the physical must hold its own, it has got to fight its way through creation, but not, surely, at the cost of the ideal.

Every man, at some time in his career, is a ferocious beast, his primitive instinct all unchained; this is called vice, or lust of the flesh, according as one is secular or clerical; but this phenomenon is just the world in the making, the 'one great Will constantly rushing into Life'—the will to live in future generations: the plan of the universe being worked out in Nature's way through the individual. Therefore one must admit that the man who infringes the rights of his fellow-man, by theft, greed, avarice, over-reaching in business, is an infinitely more guilty person than the one who—even indiscriminately—propagates his kind. For sensuality, in its less gross aspect, is merely virility, force, the dominant quality of the more 'manly' man. From his own standpoint man is justified in deifying his own forceful nature, and even in his somewhat contemptuous attitude to the

'lesser' sex, for he knows nothing better! Physical force has so long carried everything before it, in the world, that it takes not average man, but superior man, to realise that there is something *stronger than strength*; it is because woman is pure feminine, and *not* the lesser man, that in the end spirit will triumph over the flesh.

## CHAPTER XI

THERE are many good people who would have us believe that they would cheerfully give up life itself, rather than live to see an alteration effected in the permanence of the marriage tie, forgetful of the very short period, counting the world's history, in which our own particular formula of marriage has prevailed ; and unaware how numerous and far-reaching are the changes which must eventuate in due course of social evolution.

The writer must be a courageous person, indeed, who dares to cast a stone at the above flawless institution, for one is aware that to broach the subject, except in the spirit of the 'made in heaven' theory, is to invite the full wrath of the British public.

But perhaps those worthy persons, who have nothing but reprobation for the iconoclast, will try and realise that the

great world is spinning " down the ringing grooves of change," and that even breakers of images have had their uses when false gods were being worshipped in place of true.

Greatly daring, one ventures to say that the lifelong period of the marriage bond is its weakness, and not its strength ; that marriage for a period of years, renewable by mutual consent, would prove a happier, less irksome, and probably even a more permanent union than the prevailing marriage contract; and, further, that it would not be, as is generally believed, to the detriment of woman. That is, provided there were no artificial barriers raised to debar her from absolute freedom, economically, intellectually and socially.

By the present arrangement, woman—average, self-respecting woman—is either a celibate for life, or must put herself under the tutelage of man for life. Man arrogates to himself the right to form his sexual connections, for a long or a brief period, according as it pleases him ; to make a

home, and assume authority over a woman and children, or to accept the woman, and ignore the children, acknowledge a tie, or disown it ; remain ' faithful ' to a wife, or otherwise, being guided entirely by his own personal inclinations, without reference to the woman and children. And this is not overstating the case, for, given sexual inclination and temptation, the weaker go to the wall, along with any scruple that may attach to them.

If such unbounded liberty is right for one sex, it is a little illogical that the right is denied, of even a modified form of freedom, to the other ; but the position cannot last as it is, and there will never be equality between men and women until the sexual relation is established on a fair basis, giving freedom of contract to either sex.

Even to cultivated man the sensuous side of life is the real—the element which he cannot do without.

To woman the mental and spiritual must always play a leading part, and in the higher types of woman those attributes are

paramount ; hence the sexes look at these questions as from the opposite sides of a shield, each very often condemning the other, and calling the point of view false, whilst each is really true, according to the requirements of their respective natures.

Men never in their hearts condemn one another for what women consider sexual excess, because each one knows that the same desire is a fundamental part of his own nature.

This exuberance will only be kept in check when women have control of the marriage relation ; by nature the child is hers, the home should be hers, and the husband accepted, or dispensed with, at her pleasure.

Men have chafed long enough at the permanent tie, have evaded it at will, though binding the woman securely : it is time, in the interest of all, that woman asserted her liberty of choice. It is not fair to bind either sex in chains which gall and fetter throughout life, stunt, and deteriorate the faculties, and tend to foster domestic

vices, deceit, lying, and petty tyranny, and the arrangement is doubly unfair to woman; it is appalling to know that to this day she must (legally) endure neglect, deception, the humiliation of knowing herself a lifelong drag upon a man, and, short of raising a scandal in the divorce court, which would probably prove ineffectual, she cannot rid herself — or him — of the incubus; and certainly not, unless personal violence has been added to her other wrongs.

It is true that divorce is available, given certain grievances, if one or other of the parties wish to break the bond, but let them both agree to do so, and a wise and just law decrees that on no account can this be permitted; those two people are forthwith condemned to marriage for life, and with no possibility of appeal, or reprieve. Take another case in which, should the tie be severed, the woman finds herself a marked individual, upon whom a certain stigma rests, even when she is entirely innocent.

No; the present marriage contract is surely a clumsy subterfuge which deceives

nobody, the marriage service nothing but a farce, and " with all my worldly goods I thee endow " one of the many falsehoods uttered in the name of the Church.

Day after day the Church looks on, and sanctions solemn vows of lifelong duty, and obedience, which are liable to be set aside any day, by the law of the land. The puerile promise to ' obey ' one's husband is being evaded constantly by the modern woman, and winked at, vulgarly speaking, by the modern cleric: and surely no intelligent woman conceives it her duty to obey against her better judgment any man she may happen to marry. As to the permanence of the bond, could anyone contemplate, without horror, engaging even a servant for life, and yet this has been the length of service, for centuries, of women, to men.

The mere fact that the arrangement is irrevocable, weakens, if it does not obliterate, the desire to please; consequently the advantages of one another's society, the intellectual companionship, which with cul-

tured people forms a great part of the pleasure of marriage, is in danger from the outset.

In a state of slavery, life servitude may have had its advantages, undoubtedly so, where women were kept in seclusion, harems and so on, which unfitted them, later in life, to fend for themselves, but for comparatively free women it is an impossible condition.

The life deliberately chosen, and led, by Mary Wollstonecraft, and that of the imaginary heroine of Grant Allen's " Woman who Did," were both an inarticulate cry of the sentiments which are now all around us, trying to find fuller expression.

Both these women, the real and the fictitious, were despised and rejected of their world; they were as those born out of due time, but they were really the forerunners of the truth which must ultimately be accepted.

Mary Wollstonecraft was a true pioneer of the cause of freedom ; she demonstrated in her own life her sincere belief in the

right of woman to perfect conjugal liberty : she failed of course individually, but she pointed the way for those who were by her example emboldened to follow.

By her failure she proved, as others have done, that the position of independence will not be achieved by woman putting herself at the mercy of man : naturally it has quite the contrary effect, and a legal contract is required—until Utopia is established —to safeguard the interests of all : in this very commercial world, contracts by word of honour have scarcely proved satisfactory to date.

Here to glance at the wide difference between liberty and licence. No level-headed person would contemplate giving free play to passions, which are already more than sufficiently unrestrained ; but licence is not the special attribute of woman, and if man can be trusted as the captain of his soul there is little to fear from the freedom of woman.

There is as vast a difference between gratifying a natural desire, and indulging

in every whim, as there is between a man, who cannot pass an inn without going in to drink, and the one who takes his liquor in moderation, and at stated times.

Even these last few years, when almost every day, certainly every month, has marked some fresh loosing of the bonds (conventional or legal) which held our grandmothers—even these few years have proved that woman can enjoy an immense amount, comparatively, of social and economic liberty, without showing any special desire to toss her cap over the mill.

It is agreed that in English-speaking countries—England, America, etc.—where woman, and particularly the young person, is permitted far more liberty than in any other part of the world, she is really more staid and self-reliant than where curbed and hedged round with artificial restraints.

## CHAPTER XII

A MARRIAGE entered into for a limited period should of course be absolutely binding on both sides during that term, in order to obviate any suspicion of promiscuity; if, at the expiration of the time, there were a mutual wish, or the wish of either, to part, they should be free to do so, without reproach or disgrace to anyone concerned, and with no stigma attaching to the children, who would belong during their early years, without question, to the mother.

A father's rights of parentage should of course be recognised and provided for, and, although we have no wish to slur over this very important point, we do not propose dealing with it here, in detail. There is no doubt that children will always prove a great bond between the couple who mutually beget them, and that the majority of these will continue to find sympathetic

ties in their offspring, and a variety of interests, which will hold them together; and the mere knowledge that they are free to part will serve to sustain the sentimental relationship of the parents. It seems human nature to undervalue the person who is tied to one, irretrievably, which is one reason why devoted lovers often make most indifferent husbands and wives, and is the main cause of near relations' incivility to one another: were any of these persons on probation, they would probably behave very differently.

If people are not prepared to cultivate the higher emotional feelings in the tenderest relation of life, the union had better be dissolved, for among civilised beings it is not worthy to continue. It is merely a conventional idea that man, or for that matter woman, is necessarily a desirable creature "to have and to hold" *for life*: the chances are he, or she, is nothing of the sort; and, if a man wants to leave a woman, she is far better without him. Her real trouble is the supposed

stigma of being 'deserted'; take away the disgrace, and she would most likely gladly be rid of him.

Without doubt, the union of two people for life is the ideal one, other things being equal, but because this cannot be attained by all, why condemn countless people to celibacy, to perpetual jarring with one another, or to semi-disgrace, during the whole span of life, in having failed to subject, or say adjust, one's individuality to that of another.

Exhaustive arguments are at present being advanced in execration of divorce and in laudation of the 'sanctity of the marriage tie,' by persons presumably well-meaning, who offer their approval of the outside of the cup and platter. It must be so nice and comfortable to look on at the lifelong torture of somebody else, and nod a patronising approval of the moral qualities which another human being has evolved, through offering up his, or her, whole happiness, in propitiation of the great god Respectability.

When our Eastern fellow-subjects practised the rite of suttee, all England cried out in protest against the sacrifice of life which it envolved. Because a man was so unfortunate as to die—it argued—why need that cause any misfortune to his wife, other than perhaps a natural grief at her loss : but, nowadays, the twentieth-century cleric, and all his followers, maintain that it is only right and moral that whatever befalls one partner, no matter how far he, or she, may depart from their honour, and their legal contract, the other must endure to the bitter end, and immolate himself, or herself, upon the pyre of their lost hopes, and perished affections.

But who indeed believes in the fiction that the abolition of divorce would be the means of compelling people to live happily together ever after ? It is perhaps too trite to mention that one cannot make a nation virtuous by act of parliament, but how true ! Individual inclination must, and will, be obeyed, but it cannot be for the good of either the unit, or the com-

munity, that a connection, entered into by a man and a woman, should be incapable of legalisation. Not only is the respect of the world withheld from people in such case, but the woman at least, who cannot be 'made an honest woman of,' is apt, through public condemnation, to lose—most fatal loss of all—her own self-respect. The result of public ostracism is, not that inclinations are restrained, but that secrecy is observed in compassing their gratification, whereby deceit and hypocrisy are fostered *ad libitum*. The essence of all union between the sexes should be some form of contract which will bear the light of day: marriage is a public concern that affects the community so vitally that illicit connection is against its true interests. The mating of two persons should be on such a basis as fits it to receive social sanction: purity of purpose will bear scrutiny, but an illicit act is almost certainly detrimental to somebody.

It is only a conventional idea, that one partner must necessarily be *dead* before

the other weds again, and is clearly the outcome of the barbarian's lust to kill his rival: males fought to the death, for the right of possessing the female, who naturally fell to the survivor.

The possibility of making a contract, other than for life, would surely induce both sexes to marry earlier than they are doing now, when, year by year, the age for marriage becomes more advanced until, at the present time, numerous people, and particularly intellectual ones, make a marriage of reason late in life, when there is little chance of their having, and enjoying, children, and they realise too late that the chief object of their being remains unfulfilled.

After all, youth is the time for marriage, rather than later life, and it is the right of every woman, as well as man; yet how little chance there is of this being accomplished, when, not only are the sexes so numerically unequal, as they are in England, but artificial conditions accentuate this disparity, so that thousands of women

are doomed to celibacy, and loneliness, during the very years when they are most fitted for reproduction, and, at the same time, their male contemporaries are wasting their youth, and health, and vitality, in sensuous excesses, only to bring, later in life, the husk and shell of manhood to some chosen woman, as the precious gift, forsooth, of himself!

It is time woman rejected the male wreck, who happens to survive dissipation, and satiety, and demanded her right to the best youthful years of a man's life, for the paternity of her young.

The woman to whom domesticity fills the whole of existence would desire a permanent tie, most likely, as would those who find themselves happily mated; but there is a very large class of modern women whose interest in public and intellectual matters fills a great deal of their lives; yet, as certainly, in no way unfits them to be the mothers of the race. Quite the contrary; they are eminently suitable to transmit their qualities to future genera-

tions, and to train the young in the highest mental and moral ideals.

But the absolute surrender of one's life to another's keeping does not commend itself to this stamp of independent woman, and she is therefore debarred by public opinion, convention, from satisfying in her own way—and a perfectly 'womanly' and legitimate way—all those senses of which the reproductive principle is composed.

Can it be for the good of the race that, whilst the grossest specimens of humanity people the earth, large numbers of the most refined, and best equipped, do not marry at all, or only late in life.

Sex is a fundamental principle of human nature, and no one can afford to deny or suppress its appetites, without suffering a penalty in some part of his, or her, organism. There is a lack of expansion in the life of the celibate for which no mere intellectual achievement can compensate; the life is not complete which is starved, and stunted, in this respect, and it is not civilisation, but barbarism, which so regu-

lates social conditions that this state of affairs is compulsory.

Many a woman yearns for a child of her own, who has no desire for the continuous companionship of a man.

'Proper' people will not discuss these topics, and pretend to think the mass of celibate women are content with their lot; being human they cannot be content, but the majority will suffer anything rather than admit the cause of their dissatisfaction, because they entertain some baseless idea, that the truth in this case is immodest. Almost all the littleness, and pettiness, and spitefulness, which are so freely quoted against women, and in many cases rightly so, are the result of thwarted and perverted maternal instinct, and most of the prurient literature of the day owes its origin to the same perverted source. Call it sexual desire if you like, and laugh at the old maid if you will, but she is an incomplete entity, by reason of man's decree; the fact of her withered womanhood is a tragedy, and it seems actually funny to the crude brutality

of man (women we are told are deficient in a sense of humour) that countless numbers of the weaker sex, the objects of man's 'chivalry,' should fade and languish in the unnatural environment to which he has condemned her. Each sex has a right to the moderate satisfaction of his, or her, senses, during the period of youth, and under conditions that are not harmful to the community, and woman should now claim her right as well as man.

Nothing is more cruel, and less chivalrous, than the gibe 'old woman,' as a term of opprobrium, yet it is used everywhere. It is merely the sex problem in a different guise, and the underlying idea is that the woman who has ceased to be of value, sexually, to man is a creature worthy only of contempt. Hence the slur 'old maid'; she is branded as being valuable to no man sexually—therefore, of course, valueless to the world at large!

Is it possible that mankind is blind to the immense amount of useful work, not to say agreeable and cultivated companion-

ship, contributed by women who are in no way attached to the 'lords of creation,' or to discern the many years of activity, mental and bodily, that are possible to an 'old woman'—viz. one over the age of, say, forty!

Man has yet to learn that woman has a positive value of her own, and that one quite independent of her relations with him. In all things which are capable of barter, there is a difference—often a wide one—between intrinsic worth and market value. So far woman has been estimated at her market value, which, of course, has been regulated, like any other market, by the law of supply and demand. When she ceases to be in the market matrimonially, one ventures to say she will be estimated at a very different figure from the prevailing one.

## CHAPTER XIII

It must be borne in mind, that the conditions of a less permanent form of marriage would be in no way analogous to the present irregular connections formed chiefly for the convenience of men. In the latter arrangement, children and their welfare are the last thing desired by either person concerned: it is a bond of the senses only, and one in which woman holds no acknowledged power.

In marriage for a term, woman would be no pariah, and outcast, but mistress of herself and her position, with clearly defined rights for herself and her children. And, on the surface, the net result of it all would be very little different from that of the existing contract. The people who wished to live together, for life, would do so, and those who wanted to separate would be free to part; this difference, however, there would be—a woman would

have *equal freedom with man,* if she chose to avail herself of it.

The grave effect of the marriage relation *upon a woman* is evident, and, to one morally and mentally well balanced, must always appear so serious an undertaking, that there is little danger of her rushing into it, at any rate more lightly than at present, merely because of a chance, that the fetters might eventually be broken.

A marriage contract, like any other agreement, should be open to renewal if desired, but as such a union is repulsive, unless the higher feelings are engaged, a woman would be free to reject the bond—*as a man does to-day*—if it had ceased to be one of affection.

It is a mistake to cry out that this plan is non-moral, or against the best interests of humanity. On the other hand, it is immoral to live in marital connection with a being to whom one has personal aversion, or even indifference ; this is in some cases called by the ugly word prostitution, though many people assume that that

is a state never known inside the marriage bond.

In demanding of man the lifelong care of, and sympathy with, one woman—that which is counted fidelity—we are asking of him what average man is quite unable to compass, and then blaming him for the deficiency. Nature apparently did not fashion him to be faithful to one woman, and neither have conventional rules achieved this end. They have merely fostered his baser qualities, engendering all manner of subterfuge, deceit and trickery to enable him to gain his own way—which he intends to take, in spite of anybody or anything.

The term 'immoral' is loosely applied to any unauthorised connection between the sexes, but, even in the particular case of infidelity in marriage, the most immoral part of the proceeding may be the lie which is foisted upon the partner, who is defrauded, as well as deceived. Immorality means, among other things, duplicity, betrayal of trust; and it is this departure from truth

which, apart from an actual breach of the seventh commandment, depraves the character, and destroys mutual confidence.

All this is the real cause of most of the unhappiness of married life; whereas, if the facts of the case were acknowledged, and faced calmly, there would be far less disappointment over broken vows in the 'holy estate.' Man's sentiment for woman is chiefly passion, and so transient that it is an utterly insecure foundation upon which to build that which is intended to survive the requirements of the hour.

He may be 'protective,' so long as his sexual feelings are alive, towards the object of his protection, but when these fade, and almost invariably this occurs with every man, in time (frequently within a very short time), that individual is harder than the nether millstone, towards the object of his late affection.

His disposition is that of the bee, which flits from flower to flower, and whose business it is to vary the type; and with all the laws man has made for the repression,

and seclusion, of woman, he has never made one which has interfered with his own freedom of choice. Conventions, which are supposed to control him, are a dead letter, which nobody pretends to believe in, far less to abide by.

One must concede, and freely, that if poets' dreams were true, and faith and devotion, as described by them, were within practicable grasp, then—well there would be little need for divorce courts, or judicial separations; but unfortunately the complete merging of one individuality into that of another is of very rare occurrence, mutual sympathy and trust still less common.

It is that reaching out of the soul to the highest, the best that we know, the attempt to gain the happiness, we feel is somewhere in the infinite: that aching longing to be nearer—nearest—to the heart of another human being, and which for most of us will, in this life, remain unsatisfied.

In primitive peoples, this want—or its equivalent—is satisfied more or less by the

mere physical possession of the one sex by the other ; as man goes up the scale of development, his spiritual needs are evolved, he becomes more and more difficult to satisfy, until at his highest mental altitude he knows that the self is, and must be, alone.

Physical needs, and joys, and mundane affairs, will admit of a partner, but the complex and mysterious something, which we know as the Ego, is both at one with the great universe, yet indissolubly Itself, and alone.

## CHAPTER XIV

It is notable that, in the three cases in which the ancients deified a man, and worshipped him as God—viz. Jesus Christ, Buddha and Confucius—he was in each instance credited with a human mother, whose purity was unquestioned ("Thou didst not abhor the Virgin's womb"), whilst the grosser element of a male parent was eliminated. For centuries the Virgin Mary has been an object of reverence, not really, however, for her supposed virginity, but for her maternity; she is venerated as the Madonna, the type of the motherhood of the world.

After the sexual excesses ascribed to the heathen gods, and goddesses, and vestal virgins, and what not, the idea of a woman's stainless life, given up to the care of her perfect child, was a great conception, and one bound to touch the human note in both sexes. Then later, by some mental and

moral contortion, the type, as personified by the Virgin, drifted into the conventual ideal, a revulsion no doubt, from the excesses practised in all the forms of heathen worship; the backward swing of the pendulum, from a licentious age, producing, as a matter of course, asceticism, as its direct antithesis; and hence the celibate ideal of the Middle Ages.

Mary is glorified as the Mother of God, and her accredited influence over her Son is the strongest factor in her claims to divinity.

Women, however, owe no debt of gratitude to the various religious bodies that so long dominated the world; the part of the priest has always been to keep her under his authority, and frequently in a state of active degradation; her sensibilities, and emotions, have been among his most valued 'properties,' the world over, and the sum of the indignities she suffered, in former times, at the hands of the priesthood, is a revolting piece of history.

Then, just as the spirit of Chivalry had

begun to raise her status, and set value upon her gifts and favours, it pleased the middle-class German Luther, and his uncouth Reformation, with its brutal realism, to relegate her once more to the menial side of life, ignoring her right to the barest respect, and totally excluding her from any opportunities of intellectual and spiritual culture.

One trembles to mention, in this connection, the apple of Eden, Adam's spare rib, and the sentiments of the Apostle Paul, but they have all undoubtedly wrought lasting mischief in retarding the advance of woman.

We are of course familiar with the other side of the picture, and the arguments that man's love for woman, his chivalry, etc., were the origin of all the arts and graces of life, the poetry and sentiment of the world: and we freely grant that man's higher feelings for woman induced idealisation of the sex, and accordingly, directly she was even partially raised, or permitted such freedom as enabled her to develop her own gifts, *she had power to elevate him.*

This was not perhaps recognised to the full during the ages of chivalry, and it has needed the perspective of distance to enable the world to appreciate the beauty of that idealistic movement. If we could, however, foresee the view our descendants in turn will take of the treatment in the aggregate, which has been meted out to woman, up to date, in what category will they place her martyrdom, during the centuries of her oppression, when she has been compelled by law, and society, to immolate herself, and frequently her children, upon the altar of miscalled 'duty'; when her care for, and love of, man and her offspring have been the very weapons used against her to compel submission.

The self-sacrifice, and patient endurance of woman, during those æons of time, is incalculable; so that, with no desire to discount the services of the knights of fair dames, one must concede that their performances (which were really the strutting, and preening of the barn-door cock, who is courting the admiration of the ladies of his

choice) are not to be compared, as an achievement, with the fortitude, the sympathy and moral strength, which women have managed to conserve, during the centuries of their thraldom. Men disown their obligations to women, but women in the mass will never repudiate their duties—whilst the world is full of mothers.

Charles Kingsley writes of "... the heroism of an average mother. Ah, when I think of that last broad fact, I gather hope again for poor humanity, and this dark world looks bright, this diseased world looks wholesome to me once more—because, whatever else it is or is not full of, it is at least full of mothers."

The fact is, women on the whole always have treated, and no doubt always will treat, man far better than he deserves; her affection for him is so largely composed of the protective, maternal quality, her love of tending and serving him is the instinctive feeling of the motherhood of the whole world: man is after all irresponsible—at her mercy—in short, he is her child.

Even the detractors of the sex graciously admit the enormous power and responsibility which are vested in woman, and especially in her influence upon the young ; and it is an accepted fact that most great men have had exceptionally good and enlightened mothers. The impressions of earliest years, when the mind is fresh and plastic, are indelible, and it is to be observed that men with a real conviction of the inferiority of woman have been in close contact, at an early age, with some undesirable specimens of the sex.

These youthful impressions are well illustrated in the lives of Byron and of Schopenhauer, who were both unfortunate in possessing singularly silly and frivolous mothers, and both men retained through life the profoundest contempt for women. Their judgment was positively warped on the subject ; and they seemed quite unable to estimate a good woman, when they met one, or to believe there was such a being. It is a not unlikely surmise that St Paul had an early ' affair ' which did not run

smooth: he was just the stamp of intellectual, but slightly priggish man, who most dislikes being flouted by the sex, and his frequent slaps and fleers at womankind suggest a desire to 'get even' with somebody—possibly a Delilah of his youth!

Many a man who talks glibly enough about the inferiority of woman is only half in earnest, and probably entertains a genuine respect for his mother, and the women of his own family. This is certainly the case with Frenchmen, and one quotes them freely, as among the foremost in civilisation, and culture; whatever attitude they may adopt towards woman in the abstract, to them a mother is sacred.

## CHAPTER XV

EVERY woman, who is physically and mentally fit, should have the right to bear a child if she desire it, and that at the age when maternity calls aloud for fulfilment.

Maternity is necessary for the completion of that woman's life, and it is the very reason of her existence.

Furthermore, she should have the right to choose her fitting mate, the one to whom instinct points, as the complement of her being, and therefore the natural parent of her child. The 'love child' is notoriously the flower of the flock, and for the above reason, he or she was conceived under circumstances of sexual selection.

This does not of course apply to the myriads of poor creatures brought into being haphazard, through lust and unrestrained passion, allied to want, greed, fear, deception and all the lowest feelings, of which illicit union is usually composed.

Such children indeed suffer the cruellest wrong it is possible for humanity to bear; not the conventional 'nameless' 'fatherless' nonsense which has so long and unjustly been hurled at them, but the bitter wrong of coming into the world unloved, unwanted, and with a warped and perverted nature. And this applies not only to those born 'out of wedlock,' but to *many of those* born according to the sacred sanction of the Church.

The greater number of individuals who are brought into the world, in this wholesale, promiscuous, unselected way, the smaller number there are who are fit to 'survive,' in the sense of carrying on the highest attributes of the race: until man, with all his reason and knowledge and science, which he applies to the propagation of his horses, and pigs, to their manifest improvement, stops short of applying the same principle to the highest type of animal, and in fact deliberately prevents its operation.

This great evil of being 'basely born'

is largely due to economic conditions; countless loveless marriages are contracted by people (women chiefly) who have neither the means, the opportunity, or the self-reliance, to fend for themselves, and who believe that their one 'chance' in life lies in marriage. Conventionality, and every other worldly consideration, urges them to this course; their artificial surroundings (and all civilised women are surrounded, more or less, by formalism) convince them that affection is by no means necessary to a desirable marriage. A suitable establishment is the main thing, and personal preference has not a chance of weighing in the balance against an 'eligible' suitor.

The conventional woman has bowed to that decree for centuries, till she has grown to believe that love's young dream is a kind of juvenile complaint of early youth, which can have no possible connection with the serious business of settling in life.

She can generally simulate a temporary surface preference for the man she marries, and he is usually so filled with egotism

that he fails to discern its shallowness. He has chosen the woman in the good old way, and everything is all right, until he awakens one fine day to wonder why his 'love match' did not turn out a success. Then he decides there's no such thing as LOVE—it's all HUMBUG.

And man is surprised that woman is so good an actress.

When he wrested from her all power, and made her alternately his plaything and his slave, he fostered in her the cunning and deceit of the serf—the only adequate weapons of the weak against the strong.

The above type of woman is impeding (chiefly through ignorance) the advancement of her sex: she is still hampered by the harem conditions, and honestly believes her safety lies in conciliating her conquerors; her attitude is precisely the same as that of the freed slaves of America, who immediately after the abolition refused to quit their late owners, positively resented their freedom, and were afraid to start a life of independence. This style of woman

is convinced (hasn't Man with a capital M told her) that her strength lies in her weakness !

So it does, if her goal in life is personal, selfish comfort—that is, for the small number who are young and pleasing, *and so long as they are young and pleasing.*

Modern woman, with heart and brain, has another end in view ; she is accused of selfish aims, and the desertion of her ' sphere,' but it is the harem-bred, pussy-cat woman who is selfish, and the black-leg of her sex.

Modern woman is working for the freedom and betterment of all, and recognises in that a far worthier aim than a soft nest for herself, and she has at last realised that as the mother of the race her power is infinite ; it is just conceivable that the entire female population could repudiate their ' wifely obligations ' let us say, to be polite, and go out on strike, but it is utterly inconceivable that mankind could exist without them.

## CHAPTER XVI

THE trend of the thought and legislation of the day is towards community of interest, and even those who bitterly revile what is nominally socialism, and everything that pertains to it, are helping to make laws, and mould thought for the greatest good of the greatest number. It is all a current, flowing towards what is, broadly speaking, communism—that is, the 'pooling' of individual possessions, talents, advantages, for the benefit of all.

At what point individual rights are going to make a fight for it is not clear, but already there are horrible suggestions abroad for the pooling of family life by means of 'group marriage.'

And this form of marriage counts its adherents, not necessarily among the ignorant and vicious, but among those who profess good and sufficient reasons for advocating such an arrangement; though

from what standpoint it differs from licence, pure and simple, it is difficult to discern: certainly such a plan was never advanced in the interest of woman, but for the indulgence—with safety—of man.

One can detect in such a scheme nothing in the world but an attempt to justify excessive lust, with no care for anyone, or anything, but self.

Group marriage is not a new idea, but a revival; it has been practised in the course of the world's history, as also has almost every other form of union that it is possible to devise; in fact, from time to time, and among various peoples, everything in the way of marriage has been tried, *except, be it noted,* that in which the interests of the woman and the child are paramount.

Always they have been subjected to the man's terms.

Socialism already seems to anticipate a time when woman's altruism will be so highly developed that she will have no *individual* family affections; she will love

*humanity* so deeply that home ties will be merged in the good of the community!

At the risk of being considered retrogressive, we trust that that day will never dawn.

Then indeed we should have returned to the lowest condition of animal life, and group marriage would be justified.

There are some things at least which are outside the pale of common possession, and are the undoubted right of the individual, and first and foremost of these is the Mother. We can have but one mother, no matter what else is capable of duplication, and certainly a pooled edition of family life would never supply the place of the individual home.

A great deal is said nowadays about the failure of home life, and the abolition of the home, in favour of State control of children, but such a scheme can never succeed, nor will it be attempted, whilst women, and mothers, have a voice in deciding such matters. Not only is the personal care and love of the mother most essential

during infancy and childhood, but for some reason young people herded together, and reared in a wholesale way, suffer in the finer side of their nature. Nothing, we believe, could be more fatal to the individual, and the State, than the loosening of home ties.

Whether the man of the future will have a permanent place in the home remains to be seen, but home is a necessity for the mother, and the child: the man who even begets that child is merely a side issue, in matters domestic; he may come and go, but three things should remain indivisible, the Mother, the Child and the Home.

The suggestions here set forth are not for the domestication of woman, at the expense of every other faculty, by no means her immolation again upon the domestic hearth, but for the regulation of conditions enabling her to rear her young, in a place of security, with immunity from harmful influences, and in the environment suitable to her station in life.

The privacy of domesticity is necessary

for the training of the unfledged moral and mental faculties, and this will never be successfully achieved in the glare and competition of public institutions. All the good seed requires sowing and allowing to germinate, and the character building up before the individual is robust enough to take his or her place in the world, though that world be only the public school : even the birds want their nest, and the cubs their lair ; how much more do the human young require the protection of home!

As to the man, the old-fashioned tyrannical patriarch has almost—though not quite—been civilised off the face of the earth, and the men of the age are taking infinitely less control in the household than those who married even five and twenty years ago ; they are becoming more and more an adjunct of the house, not the prime factor, whose every fad and frown is to be considered. And this is as it should be ; man is not really a domestic creature ; his place is the outdoor life of the hunter, the warrior, the breadwinner ; he is but an

incident in the home, what in commercial circles is called a 'side line.' One can conceive an ideal home without a man—not necessarily without him, but it might be so—but no ideal home can exist without a woman.

Average unthinking woman would protest in dismay at the idea of home without, as a permanent inmate, MAN; she thinks he is the be-all, and end-all, of her existence, *but this is her illusion*; that same woman, without knowing it, worships domesticity; many such women marry for a home, and a child—not the selfish worldling bent on securing an 'establishment,' but just the normal affectionate hard-working woman, who toils at least as arduously as the man. *She thinks* it is the man she is in love with, but it is the home and the child: and the more simple and domestic she is, the less she loves man individually; he is only the means to an end, she is not nearly so critical, and selective, as her intellectual sisters, and practically for her *any man would do*.

Another style of woman, to whom the

wide world is Home, and whose hearthstone is to be found by any wayside, is at a loss to understand the fetichism lavished by the domestic one upon such sacred institutions as—say, Spring Cleaning, and Quarter Day ! Still the worship is sincere, and is to be reckoned with, and helps to prove how strong are the ties of home and domesticity ; these commonplace household seasons, even, are some of the cords binding a family together, although it be only with conventional respectability—part of the 'houseband,' *one time* represented by the husband, the one who bound all together.

We have quoted the Virgin Mary as a typical mother ; her vocation was maternity, not wifehood, and we have no record that she was molested by Joseph ; indeed, her adherents consider it profanation to suggest that he was anything but guardian of the Mother and Child. He appears to have been a worthy person, who took a back seat in the household ; when his services were required in the perilous journey of the flight into Egypt, he was

with them to help and protect, otherwise he was not much in evidence.

It is observed to be modern man, not woman, who has scorned the home, and decried it, used or abused it at his will, and, in countless cases, only settled in it when age crept on, and outside pleasures palled. In the words of his brother of the slums, it has been a case of 'no place like home—when the pubs are shut.'

Women have all the responsibility and care of the home and children, all the disadvantages of curtailed liberty; and to every woman a home and children mean sacrifice, even if she have, in addition, great pleasure and pride; surely then she has the right to the ownership of her own children, to control and direct the family life as she sees fit, and to choose the mate who may be her companion in it. If man desires to enjoy the advantages of domesticity—and there are advantages to be obtained from it—it rests with him to contribute to the welfare of those whose domestic life he proposes to share.

Children would certainly benefit by the unquestioned authority of the mother; one of the saddest features in present-day divorce is the way in which children are flung from one parent to the other, home life for them is *nil*, and they usually become what is practically the go-between of two enemies.

## CHAPTER XVII

In former times public works, the administration of justice, etc., now under State control, were in the hands of powerful individuals, kings, feudal lords, the Church, the great landowners, and so on, who were responsible for the welfare of their subjects, in consideration of servitude, and certain dues of homage, and vassalage, which were rendered by the underlings, and by all those, in fact, who were beneath the ruler.

The king, or overlord, on the other hand, owed his people various privileges—protection from enemies, dwelling room, the right to till the soil, and live upon its proceeds, and so forth.

Thus the rights were not all on one side, nor the duties all on the other, although to be sure they were by no means so equally divided as they might have been; however, when the noble went too far in asserting his own interests, as opposed to those of his

dependants, he was occasionally brought to book, as witness King John and Magna Charta.

The king exacted vassalage from his nobles, the nobles the same from their subjects (according to their degree and class), and every male subject in the kingdom exacted servitude from his wife! Every woman was the serf of her 'lord and master'; that was a fate she could not escape, were she highly born, or lowly. Nobody questioned *his* rights and *her* duties.

As the ages have rolled on, all serfs, villeins, etc., have been freed of their vassalage to the individual 'superior'—all, we observe, except woman, who is still enjoined to 'obey' her master.

Men, bit by bit, outgrew their serfdom; women have never done so; men banded together, and demanded their rights from the ruler or king; but each woman had to look to an *individual master*, if she dreamed of redress; her sex would have had to overthrow, not one tyrant, but thousands

of them, hence their freedom has never been accomplished. It is a good many years since learned ecclesiastical man gravely discussed whether or not woman possessed a soul, and it is some time since English law decided that she was no longer a chattel of her husband : there was never a time when she was deemed too insignificant to go to the scaffold for her crimes, if she committed any, or to be burnt at the stake as a witch : at all events her entity is now sufficiently admitted to permit her to own personal property, the State recognises her existence, and exacts her allegiance—(we leave to others the task of battling with the subject, of her most unjust taxation, without representation)—she has therefore the right to look to the State for protection, redress in case of need, justice and freedom.

Man's rights and duties lie between him and the State, as they once lay between him and his master or lord.

Woman's rights and duties are between her and the State, as they were formerly

alleged to be between her and man. Man's position as her lord and master has become obsolete, as the feudal lord's position became obsolete, through modern development, and altered social conditions.

What man would not laugh to scorn, today, the bare thought that he owed vassalage to his landlord! The old-time necessity for such a thing has ceased to be, and so it is between man and woman. The ownership of woman, by man, has gone overboard, along with the right divine of kings, and various other effete ideas.

Without discussing the question, whether socialism, in its entirety, is likely to be established in the near future, it is plain that the tendency of the age is towards socialistic legislation, call it by what name we will.

The heavy taxation of lands, incomes, etc., is all in the way of equalising the possessions of the rich, and the poor. That the moneys so collected, instead of being grabbed by the Church, or the ruler, as they would have been in olden times, are

partly redistributed again, in the form of free education, libraries, baths, sanitation, and lighting of the cities, old age pensions, and various other aids, to the improved social condition of the working classes. A still more important point is marked in that these advantages are considered the *right of man*, and are not to be confounded with the old-fashioned charity of the rich to the poor.

And thus is recognised the duty of the State, to the individual, in return for the individual's duties of citizenship.

It is being realised, though slowly, that the individual has the right to assistance from the State to enable him to live decently and express his being in the best interests of that State; and that this is, after all, only insurance money, paid by the nation, for which it will receive ample recompense. A man, enabled to earn a respectable living, helps create the wealth of the world; a wastrel, or a criminal, is a costly individual, whose expenses are bound to be paid by somebody.

Woman's position is here likened to that of the working classes, and for this reason she has never been of a privileged class, but of a dependent one; and, in fact, she has been literally treated as of the lowest class, for she has always been in a sense *beneath the caste of the man her equal*, to whatever rank she belonged.

At the present time, economic conditions are such that the physical strain upon women is too great to last, without serious detriment to herself and the race; she has therefore the right to seek redress from the State, and to expect that form of help which will enable her to fulfil her duties of maternity, under favourable circumstances.

Under the prevailing arrangements of the labour market, women are doing too much of the work of the world, and men are doing too little. It is significant that there are no hordes of female unemployed wandering about the country, and no danger that there will be, for woman, with all her faults, is, in the mass, both too energetic, and too adaptable, to be ever long out of service;

she is, in fact, far too ready to work, and to take on any job that man either will not, or cannot, tackle; but she cannot be blamed for this, for, in the majority of cases, she has children depending upon her for food, and it is a choice of half-a-loaf of bread, or none.

It is here among the least artificial classes, that in striking the bed-rock of family life, one finds that domestic arrangements are in their essence matriarchical; the mother is answerable for the family, without however the nominal power of ruler; among workers she is the real head of the house, and the responsible person where home and children are concerned, whether the latter be called 'legitimate' or otherwise. The mystery to enlightened women is why these workers endure the loutish men who, for the most part, prey upon them; but convention of a sort rules the roost, even in this lower stratum, and 'marriage lines' are still words to conjure with.

## CHAPTER XVIII

MEN in almost every walk of life to-day are blaming women for ousting them from their work, instead of which they should place that blame in the proper quarter—that is, with the employers, who will only pay for the cheapest form of labour they can get—viz. that of women and children, thereby forcing able-bodied men to live upon the earnings of the weak.

It is manifestly unfair that the so-called 'weaker sex' should, in addition to the burdens of maternity, be compelled to do far more than half the work of the world, and that of the hardest and least remunerative kind.

The State is now making a move in the right direction, in limiting the working hours of women and children; it will be but a short step beyond that to limit the work that may be done by pregnant women, for, apart from her own *inclinations*, she has

*no right* to endanger the life and the health of the unborn citizen, and it is for those in authority to see that she shall not do so.

The State carefully refrains from putting to death by hanging, a pregnant woman, although she be a criminal, but has no scruple whatever in working her to death, or starving her to death, under similar circumstances, although she may be an innocent person.

It would require much more space than we have at our disposal to enumerate the detrimental conditions under which women labour, when quite unfitted to do so; or to consider the underfed, and half-clothed, and ill-housed, human beings, who constitute an enormous factor in the population, and who are at this very present time passing on their degenerate and vitiated constitutions to future generations.

But here we may quote at length from so undoubted an authority as August Bebel:

"It is truly anything but an agreeable sight to see women, and often pregnant

women, wheeling heavy wheelbarrows, and otherwise competing with navvies on the railway, or to watch them in the capacity of hod-carriers on buildings, mixing cement and mortar, and carrying heavy stones, or to observe them in coal pits and iron-works. Such employments rob a woman of her proper attributes, and tread her womanhood under foot ; while on the other hand men pursue a hundred different occupations which strip them of every manly characteristic. . . ."

And to continue *re* woman :

" Many of these various occupations are highly dangerous. For instance the exposure to sulphuric acid, and alkaline gases, in the making and cleaning of straw hats, and the inhalation of chlorine gas in bleaching vegetable materials, is exceedingly injurious. In the manufacture of coloured wall-papers and artificial flowers, in metachromotype in the preparation of poisons and chemicals, in the painting of

leaden soldiers, and in making leaden toys, the dangers of poisoning are great. The results of working with quicksilver in making looking-glasses are generally fatal to the unborn children of pregnant women, the making of phosphorous matches, and the employment in silk and shoddy mills, are also highly injurious. Machine work in the textile industry, the manufacture of explosive materials, and the use of agricultural machines, involve danger to life and limb. Moreover a glance at the list will suffice to show every reader, that many of the occupations quoted, demand excessive physical exertion, and tax even the strength of men. People may say as often as they like, this, or that kind of work is unfit for a woman; their protest will remain ineffectual, as long as they are unable to provide her with another and more suitable occupation."

And that last sentence is the keynote of the argument; average woman must work to live; it is not sufficient to say "don't

do this," unless some occupation is substituted which she may do. But that point could without much difficulty be arranged, for there is plenty of necessary yet harmless and suitable work for women, even if they should be in delicate health. It is by no means inferred that 'relief works' would be required, and no need to 'create an industry'; for women's work is to be found all around them, ready made. Neither is it proposed, in saying that maternity is of national importance, and should receive due recognition as such, that women should in consequence receive remuneration to sit down in idleness; but it is suggested that they are of sufficient value to receive recompense from the State, in the form of certain, and light employment, and ample payment for it, the same privilege to be extended to all women in a similar state of health, if they chose to apply for it, according to their several callings, and station in life.

If such a position were established, it is obvious that the law would be obliged to

recognise woman's standing as independent, personally, of her mate. State aid for maternity could not filter through a man to the woman ; she must hold her position in her own hands. This assistance for the mother and child will not be given—as assuredly it will some day be given—to enable idle and thriftless men to live upon it : it must therefore be quite clear from the start that they have not the remotest claim upon it ; though it will certainly be a Herculean task to persuade average 'working' man that he has no right to the earnings of a woman he consorts with, or to any money to which she is otherwise entitled. Nothing but woman's legal independence of man will achieve this ; though doubtless State arrangements could be made, securing the necessary benefits upon the mother and child, for we believe that some plan of the kind is already in operation in France.

It must be admitted that at present numerous women *are quite as unfit as are men* to take the lead in domesticity, or

any other sphere. In the words of Mrs Poyser, " I'm not denying the women are foolish. God Almighty made 'em to match the men." But responsibility is a great educator; free them of the harem conditions and they will soon learn to use their faculties.

And because all members of the sex are not ripe for a reform is no adequate reason why those who are ready should be debarred from the advantages it would confer.

## CHAPTER XIX

THE sum of the whole position is this: women's subjection, as we have noted, was accomplished in the first instance by physical force, and it has been maintained up to date by economic conditions. The world is now ruled by commercialism, and money occupies the place once held by strength of arms. Money controls the markets: the labour market with its keen competition, has forced woman to take her place in it, by so crowding man out that the majority of men, if willing, are unable to earn sufficient for themselves, *plus* a woman and children.

The old patriarchal establishment was just the State in miniature, and was formed upon the same model: woman occupied a similar place in the household, to that which man held in the State or barony; the man gave a proportion of his services, military and otherwise, and certain dues

and taxes, and the overlord gave him, in return, immunity from outside enemies, and sufficient freedom and opportunity to earn his own living.

The overlord, or ruler, took no count of woman, she was just included in the man's goods and chattels; the proceeds of her labour were for her master's benefit, though incidentally she earned her own living; her will and desires were subject to his; in return she was protected (for the man's benefit of course), and she received like a serf, or the flocks and herds, her 'keep'; for obvious reasons she 'lived in.'

The patriarchal household rested solely on the above conditions; but now that the male does *not* provide for, or protect, the female, by what process of reasoning can he possibly claim authority over her?

The State is at last compelled to recognise woman's separate entity; she will therefore look to the State for immunity from molestation, from over-work, and for the opportunity of fulfilling her natural vocation;

and man as ' Master ' is simply left out of the picture.

And we are not discussing, now, exclusively emancipated woman, or even a minority of cultured women, who want a thousand ' rights ' beyond bed and board ; but the ordinary labouring woman, who supports herself and her children, and often the useless creature, who ' owns,' and claims the right to ill-treat her.

In the near future, it must be fully recognised that woman's personality is in her own keeping, and that her obligations of maternity are due to the race, and the State, and not to any individual.

No one with the love of humanity at heart, would dream of decrying pure affection ; it does exist between the sexes, in spite of many obstacles ; but love must be a free gift, it cannot be bartered, and it is not apt to be generated by conditions which must exist, until woman is as free as man.

The foregoing theory may at first sight appear a somewhat startling one, and the

conventional mind may not readily grasp the fact that it is a plea for greater purity, and nothing in the nature of laxity in the sex relationship.

However, a careful consideration of facts, apart from the prejudice of ages, will, we doubt not, weigh down the balance in its favour.

And in conclusion, we ask the gentle reader to remember this: the sun does not move round the world any longer—*now we know better*—it is the world that revolves round the sun.

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